

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 IGA-02 DHA-02 ORM-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W
-----272021Z 003146 /43

R 271208Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3081
INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PARAMARIBO 1148

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: SPOP, EAID, NS, NL
SUBJ: PRONK DISCUSSES REMIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AID

SUMMARY: DURING SIX-DAY VISIT TO SURINAM CONCLUDED DECEMBER 19, NETHERLANDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MINISTER PRONK OFFERED DUTCH ASSISTANCE FOR REMIGRATION OF SOME SURINAMERS AND DISCUSSED STATE OF SURINAM/NETHERLANDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION. VISIT WENT WELL WITH BOTH SIDES EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH OUTCOME OF TALKS AND COURSE OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION DURING FIRST YEAR OF SURINAM'S INDEPENDENCE.

1. NETHERLANDS MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION J. PRONK VISITED SURINAM DECEMBER 14-19 TO DISCUSS REMIGRATION OF SURINAMERS LIVING IN HOLLAND AND SURINAM'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS IN CONTEXT OF NETHERLANDS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE. TWO COMMUNIQUEES WERE ISSUED SUMMARIZING RESULTS OF HIS TALKS WITH GOS, ONE WITH DEVELOPMENT MINISTER CAMBRIDGE ON THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND ONE WITH JUSTICE AND POLICE MINISTER HOOST REGARDING REMIGRATION.

2. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF PRONK VISIT WAS TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS BEGUN EARLIER THIS YEAR IN HOLLAND WITH HOOST ON QUESTION OF
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NETHERLANDS FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE THE RETURN OF SURINAMERS LIVING IN HOLLAND TO THEIR HOMELAND. THOUGH FURTHER TALKS WILL HAVE TO BE HELD, DUTCH HAVE AGREED TO PROVIDE SOME ADDITIONAL FINANCING BEYOND THE MORE THAN \$1.5 BILLION ALREADY PROMISED FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE OVER THE NEXT TEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS. NEWSPAPER REPORTS ESTIMATED

THIS AMOUNT TO BE APPROXIMATELY 100 MILLION DUTCH GULDERS (\$40 MILLION). IN ADDITION, DUTCH HAVE APPARENTLY AGREED TO CONTINUE OLD AGE PENSIONS FOR SURINAMERS IF THEY RETURN HOME. COMMUNIQUE ON REMIGRATION CALLS FOR A BASIC STUDY OF PROBLEMS INVOLVED BUT IN THE MEANTIME MAKES PUBLIC AGREEMENTS REACHED AND PROMISES ASSISTANCE IN COSTS OF TRAINING, TRAVEL, AND RECEPTION FACILITIES.

3. PRONK TOOK OCCASION OF VISIT TO TOUR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN WEST SURINAM, ALTHOUGH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WAS NOT MAJOR TOPIC OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GOS ACCORDING TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR VAN DER GELD. COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSES SATISFACTION OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS WITH FIRST YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND ANNOUNCES ESTABLISHMENT OF FIVE WORKING GROUPS UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NETHERLANDS-SURINAM DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION COMMISSION (CONS). GROUPS WILL BE FORMED TO ADVISE THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ON WEST SURINAM, AGRICULTURAL SECTOR PROJECTS, PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS, AND SOCIAL-EDUCATION SECTOR PROJECTS. NETHERLANDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION COUNSELLOR TOLD EMBOFF THAT A FIFTH GROUP WHICH WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE COMMUNIQUE WILL DEAL WITH FINANCIAL QUESTIONS AND IS LIKELY TO HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT INFLUENCE ON PROJECT SELECTION.

4. COMMENT: EXCEPT FOR SOME CRITICISM VOICED IN LEFT-LEANING DAILY "VRIJE STEM," ATMOSPHERE OF PRONK VISIT WAS GOOD. GOS WAS ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL DUTCH SUPPORT FOR REMIGRATION, BUT THERE IS NO EXPECTATION THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF SURINAMERS WILL RETURN. NONETHELESS, IF DUTCH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ENABLES GOS TO OFFER INCENTIVES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH NEEDED MANAGERIAL AND OTHER SKILLS, A RETURN OF ONLY FIVE TO TEN PERCENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CENT OF THE ESTIMATED 130,000 SURINAMERS IN HOLLAND WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT IN SURINAM'S SMALL ECONOMY. RETURN OF PENSIONERS RECEIVING DUTCH SUPPORT PAYMENTS WOULD ALSO BE WELCOME BOOST TO ECONOMY AND GOS FOREIGN EXCHANGE RECEIPTS.

5. DUTCH INTERESTS DO NOT, HOWEVER, COMPLETELY COINCIDE WITH THOSE OF GOS. IT CAN BE ASSUMED THAT SKILLED SURINAMERS EMPLOYABLE IN HOLLAND PRESENT FEW IF ANY PROBLEMS TO GOS, WHICH WOULD RATHER SEE SURINAMESE MALCONTENTS AND THE UNEMPLOYED LEAVE. HOW MANY AND WHAT SORTS OF SURINAMERS EVENTUALLY RETURN TO SURINAM WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE TO BE A MAJOR FOCUS OF THE PLANNED STUDY OF REMIGRATION PROBLEMS.

6. DUTCH SEE NEW DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WORKING GROUPS AS A MAJOR UPGRADING ON GOS MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING CAPABILITIES,

A SERIOUS LACK OF WHICH HAS DELAYED DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SEVERAL MAJOR PROJECTS. NEXT MEETING OF CONS SCHEDULED IN

PARAMARIBO JANUARY 5 TO 10 WILL FURTHER DISCUSS PROCEDURES TO
SET UP THESE GROUPS.
ZURHELLEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IMMIGRATION CONTROL, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARAMA01148
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760473-0236
From: PARAMARIBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761212/aaaaakoj.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <27 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRONK DISCUSSES REMIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AID SUMMARY: DURING SIX-DAY VISIT TO SURINAM CONCLUDED DECEMBER 19, NETHERLANDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MINISTER PRONK
TAGS: SPOP, EAID, NS, NL, (PRONK, JAN P)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006